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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2008

#### In Today's Papers

The AKP's Roadmap Is To Continue Their Mission  
Radikal, Turkiye, Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Vatan, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others: Liberal Radikal gives a front-page coverage to PM Erdogan's remarks at a dinner sponsored by TESEV, a foundation for economic and social research. Prominent journalists who attended the dinner included Ergun Babahan, Mehmet Barlas, Taha Akyol, Hasan Cemal, and Cengiz Candar. According to speculation in the press, PM Erdogan indicated at the dinner the AKP will "continue the mission," even if they are banned by the Constitutional Court. Mainstream Milliyet columnist Fikret Bila lists AKP politicians that could take over the duties in the party if Erdogan is banned from politics. These names include Ali Babacan, Mehmet Ali Sahin and Cemil Cicek because none of these names are listed in the chief prosecutor's indictment. Mainstream Vatan reports that AKP plans to hold early elections if Erdogan is banned from politics. Columnist Bilal Cetin of mainstream Vatan writes, "The AKP will adjust its roadmap based on the court's decision on whether or not to ban them." Murat Yetkin of liberal Radikal notes, "regardless of what Erdogan does or does not do, the mission of the AKP will continue through a new party if the AKP is banned." Okay Gonensin of mainstream Vatan writes, "The AKP will not amend the constitution to prevent closure, but Erdogan could run as an Independent and thus become the first Independent PM." The press indicates the bottom line is that if AKP is banned, they will create a new party in order to continue their mission.

Meanwhile, PM Erdogan attended a ceremony in Ankara yesterday on the occasion of Foundations Week and said, "Turkish society traditionally has the feeling of solidarity in times of crisis," and expressed his wish that "Turkey will not go through such periods again." He added, "The economy, the state and society have developed in a very concrete way. Because of cooperation, many problems were resolved. However, Turkey deserves more democracy, justice, production and development."

Wounded PKK is Angry with Barzani; PJAK Threatens U.S. Interests in Turkey

Sabah, Milliyet, Vatan, Cumhuriyet, Hurriyet and others: Mainstream Milliyet reports that the PKK terrorist organization suffered heavy losses during Turkish military operations last week in northern Iraq. Reportedly, the PKK is angry with Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) President Massoud Barzani for remaining silent and not criticizing the Turkish air strikes. Sabah and Milliyet report that the operations against the PKK continue in Sirnak's Bestler -Dereler region. Operations intensified yesterday following the discovery of a group of terrorists' movement in the region. The Turkish General Staff (TGS) web site reported that two terrorists were killed while trying to cross the border.

Meanwhile, Mainstream Hurriyet carried an AP article yesterday on its website indicating PJAK threats against U.S. targets in Turkey. Under the headline, "The U.S. Sold Us Out," Peritan Derseem, a senior official with the PKK's Iranian wing, PEJAK, is quoted as saying, "We have changed our stance toward the United States government and we are standing against them now," and "Maybe some day individual combatants might launch suicide attacks inside Iraq and Turkey, and even against American interests."

#### EDITORIAL OPINION: U.S. Help In The Fight Against The PKK

##### "Body Bag Deliveries"

Enis Berberoglu wrote in mainstream Hurriyet (5/6): "There have been rumors and expectations about PKK leadership being extradited from northern Iraq to Turkey. Current events, however, indicate that the U.S. does not want PKK leadership to be caught alive. Last year when PKK leader Murat Karayilan went to a hospital in Erbil for treatment, the U.S. shared this intelligence with Turkey. However later on, the U.S. blocked Karayilan's capture at the hospital. Now a year later, it seems the U.S. has revised its attitude. When

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Karayilan held a meeting at Kandil Mountain last week, the U.S. instantly informed Ankara, and air operations ensued. Thus, the U.S. no longer keeps its intelligence reports regarding PKK to itself; on the contrary it shares them with Turkey immediately. It looks like the U.S. is prepared to deliver to Turkey PKK leaders packaged in body bags. Both PKK and PJAK are having a hard time realizing this and acknowledging the fact that the U.S. has made a clear choice between Turkey and the PKK. The U.S. is on Turkey's side."

##### "The PKK Is Alienated"

Mainstream Milliyet's carried this group analysis from its regional reporters (5/6): "In its fight against PKK, Ankara has support from Washington and Baghdad. In addition, there is support from Tehran, who deals with the PJAK threat. Now Ankara hopes to complete this support chain with the Kurdish Regional Government of northern Iraq (KRG). The KRG kept silent when the Turkish army launched an air attack in the Kandil Mountain area last week. Then, over the weekend, KRG President Massoud Barzani, who used to strongly oppose cross-border operations, changed his rhetoric. On Saturday, Barzani asked the PKK to abandon violence and begin a dialogue with Turkey. The obvious switch in KRG's position created uneasiness within the PKK. PKK figures are now complaining about both Turkey and the KRG.

The statements from the PKK also complain about the intelligence-sharing mechanism between Turkey and the U.S., and about the cooperation against PJAK between Turkey, Iraq and Iran. There was speculation about the U.S. giving support to PJAK in its efforts against the government of Iran. However, it seems the U.S. does not care for PJAK any longer."

##### DTP Delegation to Meet with Talabani

All papers report a DTP delegation comprised of Ahmet Turk, Sebahat Tuncel, and Kamuran Yuksek will go to Iraq today to request Iraqi President Jalal Talabani's support against the Turkish military operations in the north. Papers also report that DTP deputies Gulden Kisanak, Aysel Tugluk and Akin Birdal paid a condolence visit to a Diyarbakir family of a PKK terrorist who was killed in the Turkish air operations in northern Iraq.

##### Trade Unions Will File Complaints over May Day Incidents

All major news outlets report leaders of several trade unions yesterday held a joint press conference to announce that they would seek legal remedies in the face of incidents that occurred on May

Day. Liberal Radikal writes in, "Next Year Another Taksim" that, "Union leaders are determined to hold May Day celebrations in Taksim next year." Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Cumhuriyet and other papers report Suleyman Celebi, the secretary-general of the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions (DISK), Mustafa Turker, the secretary-general of the Confederation of Turkish Labor Unions (Turk-Is) and Ismail Hakki Tombul, the head of the Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (KESK), issued a joint statement which noted, "The ruling AKP, the governor of Istanbul and the Istanbul police chief violated citizens' rights to life and freedom of speech and the rights to hold demonstrations and rallies." They also added, "The government does not accept that the police used disproportionate force and treated the demonstrators harshly. However, the concept of the proportionate use of force is a legal term, which is clearly defined in the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights."

#### EU Troika Meeting Takes Place in Ankara Today

All news outlets report on today's meeting between Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan and representatives of the EU. In addition to FM Babacan, NTV reports the participants will include Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel, French State Minister for European Affairs Jean Pierre Jouyet, and EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn. Mainstream Sabah writes, "The focus of the meeting will be on the closure case against the AKP, the events on May Day, and union rights." In addition, mainstream Hurriyet notes, "EU members will

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urge Turkey to continue its reforms, Babacan will brief the Troika on Turkey's progress in its reforms," and finally, "Cyprus, Iraq, and Iran will come to the agenda." Melih Asik of mainstream Milliyet writes, "This meeting is not going to defend democracy, but will be the EU's effort to save the AKP." Columnist Muharrem Sarikaya of Sabah writes, "The EU is now preoccupied with security and gas," so "issues concerning the Nabucco pipeline will be discussed at the meeting."

TV News:  
CNN Turk

#### Domestic News

Ankara's 11th Penal Court of Peace banned access to YouTube due to videos insulting Ataturk.

On May 7 CHP will submit to parliament a censure motion against PM Erdogan in connection with police brutality in May Day protests.

FM Babacan says close dialogue with the administration of Iraq and northern Iraq will continue.

Smoking in public offices and education, commercial, social and cultural facilities will be banned as of May 19, 2008.

20 people were injured in Istanbul yesterday when a municipality bus rammed into a tree after its brakes failed.

#### International News

The new Turkish judge of the European Court of Human Rights, Prof. Dr. Isil Karakas, was sworn in and took office on Monday.

The death toll from the Myanmar cyclone has reached to more than 10.000 people.

A survey conducted in Southern Cyprus shows that most Greek Cypriots are more willing to accept compensations for the loss of their assets in northern Cyprus than reunite the divided island.

WILSON